

Economic Development & Improvement Commission
Regular Meeting – Thursday March 13, 2008 – 12:00 Noon
Basement/Ground Level Conference Room, Town Hall

MINUTES

1. Call To Order – Chair Rosania called the meeting to order at 12:05 p.m.

2. Attendance and Quorum (6 members required)

Members in attendance: Chair Betty Rosania, Ken Rizzio, Tony Homicki, Brian Silver, Chris Monroe, John Adamian, Doug Sacks, Howard Greenblatt, Joan Hughes and Chris Lyons.

Members absent: Bill Knapp, Kate Mullen and Joe Cornelio.

Also in attendance: Bonnie Therrien – Town Manager, Phil Knecht – Planning & Zoning Commission Liaison, Peter Gillespie – Economic Development Manager/Town Planner.

3. Old Business

a. Status Report - Church Street/SDH Streetscape Project – Peter Gillespie reported that a pre-construction meeting would be scheduled shortly and work should begin on the Town Hall corner treatment in the next few weeks.

b. Status Report - Preserve America Master Plan – Peter Gillespie reported that the Committee is meeting on the 20th to review the final draft and that public information sessions will be set.

c. Status Report - Horse and Carriage Rides – Peter Gillespie reported that the Valentine Weekend runs were well received and that the intent in going forward with the program is to coordinate with activities planned in Old Wethersfield and to do more consistent runs when the weather is warmer. Mr. Gillespie also noted that additional funding has been requested to supplement the grant.

d. 1260 Silas Deane Highway – Bonnie Therrien noted that the 30 day period given for comments will end on March 27th. She noted that Paul Doyle and Russ Morin would be meeting with officials at the DEP this afternoon. Ms. Therrien thanked Tony Homicki and Phil Knecht for their work on circulating a petition but also made note that response from the public has not been overwhelming. Peter Gillespie noted that in the meantime, Hartford Hospital is continuing to invest on site and are in the process of constructing a new MRI facility.

4. New Business

a. Objectives and Strategies 2008 – Peter Gillespie reported that he is still waiting for the Preserve America recommendations so they can be integrated into the long-term objectives and strategies. He noted that this process should wrap up in the next few weeks.

b. Budget 2008/2009 – Bonnie Therrien reported that the 1st cuts were generally complete and that the budget is up 4.7%. She noted the increase in utility costs and health insurance. Peter Gillespie discussed

the budget cuts that have affected the EDIC budget. Ms. Therrien noted that the budget hearing sessions have been set.

c. Keiler Status – Peter Gillespie reported that Keiler is currently working on specific projects including a piece interviewing new businesses and outlining opportunities for small business starts. Additionally, they are preparing a piece on the Façade Loan Program.

d. Breakfast Meeting – April – Peter Gillespie reported that the meeting will be held on April 9th at the Wethersfield Country Club beginning at 8:00 a. m. He noted that a meeting would be set up to discuss the final details of the program.

e. Shop Local – Peter Gillespie reported that the Chamber has expressed that they would be willing to participate. He also noted that funding for this effort was sought in the budget request.

f. Silas Deane Highway Overlay Zone – Peter Gillespie reported that the Committee met on March 12th. He noted that a draft should be available in early May and that an evening forum would be planned to discuss other communities with recent experience.

5. Reports of the Town Manager -

Town Manager's Report Bonnie Therrien reported on the upcoming Green Energy Summit.

Town Council Liaison's Report – No report was given.

Planning & Zoning Commission Liaison's Report – Phil Knecht provided highlights of the March 4, 2008 meeting.

Tourism Commission Liaison's Report – No report was given.

Redevelopment Agency Liaison's Report – Ken Rizzio reported that community forums would be scheduled in May & June.

Director of Planning and Economic Development's Report - Peter Gillespie reported on the highlights of the February 27, 2008 report.

6. Chairman's Report – Betty Rosania noted the Town of Windsor's 375th Anniversary. She then discussed the possibility of having a contest to identify buildings with recent façade improvements and/or historic properties in Wethersfield Life.

6. Sub-Committee Reports -

Marketing and Communications – Peter Gillespie reported on the following topics:

- Breakfast Meeting
- Keiler
- Horse & Buggy Rides

Financial Strategies – Ken Rizzio reported that the Committee met on March 12th. Peter Gillespie distributed a memo outlining the programs summary. A brief discussion ensued regarding the availability of funding in the Silas Deane program. Ken Rizzio made a motion to transfer \$100,000

from the Express Façade program to the Silas Deane Highway program. Tony Homicki seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

8. Minutes- Approval of February 14, 2008 meeting minutes – Howard Greenblatt made a motion to approve the minutes. Chris Lyons seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

9. Next Meeting – April 10, 2008

10. Correspondence

- a.** March 2008 Monthly Report
- b.** Community Builders Institute – Crash Course
- c.** Journeys – AAA Magazine Ad

11. Adjournment – Chair Rosania adjourned the meeting at 1:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise Bradley, Assistant Planner